

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8498

UNCLAS OTTAWA 0120

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORS

SUBJ: CONTRY-FINANCED SERVICE - FOREST FIRE

REF: OTTAWA 3701; STATE 215282

1. EMBASSY HAS NOW RECEIVED LETTER FROM EXTAFF DIRECTOR FOR USA DIVISION (SHORTLIFFE) RESPONDING TO EARLIER EMBASSY APPROACH. EXTAFF HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES AND WITH CANADIAN COMMITTEE ON FOREST FIRE CONTROL. RESULTS OF THESE APPROACHES INDICATE THAT ALL CANADIAN PROVINCES WHICH SHARE FORESTED BORDERS WITH US HAVE AGREEMENTS COVERING MUTUAL FIRE CONTROL. GENERAL VIEW OF PROVINCES IS THAT PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS COVERING FIRE CONTROL APPEAR TO BE SATISFACTORY.

2. WITH REGARD TO INCIDENT OF JULY 1974 INVOLVING ONTARIO, THIS INVOLVED EMERGENCY LOAN TO ONTARIO BY US FORESTRY SERVICE OF TRAINED PERSONNEL AND AIRPLANES WITH INFRA-RED PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT. ALTHOUGH DONE WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION OR PROVISION FOR COST RECOVERY, ONTARIO GOVERNMENT HAD NO DIFFICULTY AFTER THE FACT IN PAYING COSTS INVOLVED. HOWEVER, ONTARIO OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT USE OF SPECIALIZED US EQUIPMENT SHOULD PERHAPS BE COVERED BY AN UNDERSTANDING SIMILAR TO OTHER AGREEMENTS EXISTING BETWEEN CANADIAN

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PROVINCES AND US STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES.

3. GOC THUS CONCLUDES THAT EXISTING ACCORDS BETWEEN CANADIAN AND US ENTITIES DO NOT COVER ALL POSSIBLE CONTINGENCIES AND FEELS THAT THIS TOPIC SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY PROVINCES AND EXTAFF THROUGH CANADIAN COMMITTEE ON FOREST FIRE CONTROL, WHICH WILL BE HOLDING ITS ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 27-29 IN WINNIPEG. PRIOR TO THAT MEETING, IF POSSIBLE BY JANUARY 16, EXTAFF WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ANSWERS TO FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: (A) DOES US FEEL PROBLEM BEST SOLVED BY AMENDING EXISTING AGREEMENTS AND/OR BY CONCLUDING ADDITIONAL SIMILAR AGREEMENTS, RATHER THAN THROUGH A FORMAL REQUEST BY GOC? (B) IF FORMAL REQUEST ROUTE PREFERRED, SHOULD REQUEST COVER ONLY ASSISTANCE FROM ANY US FEDERAL AGENCY OR STATE AGENCIES AS WELL? (C) WOULD US REQUIREMENT BE SATISFIED BY REQUEST OF BLANKET NATURE WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT, WHENEVER ANY SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL REQUEST FOR US ASSISTANCE IN FIGHTING A FOREST FIRE IS MADE BY A CANADIAN PROVINCE OR CANADIAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY, THIS WOULD BE FOLLOWED, AS SOON AS IS PRACTICABLE, BY A NOTIFICATION OF THE SOURCE OF REIMBURSEMENT? (D) SINCE FIRE-FIGHTING ASSISTANCE ACROSS THE BORDER HAS APPARENTLY BEEN A TWO-WAY EXCHANGE, WOULD USG BE PREPARED TO RESPOND WITH A SIMILAR FORMAL REQUEST TO GOC? (E) DOES USG ENVISAGE SUCH "REQUESTS" AS BEING BEST ACCOMPLISHED BY AN EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES OR SHOULD THEY BE EMBODIED IN A CANADIAN/US AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN FIGHTING FOREST FIRES?

JOHNSON

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